Robin Pepper

“Reassigning Meaning” by Simi Linton discusses the meaning of the word disabilities and takes apart the word to show the reader how it affects persons with disabilities. Linton says there are positives for medical purposes but many negatives to using the word disabilities to describe people. Linton goes on to discuss the many other terms that could be used to describe persons with disabilities such as nice words like physically challenged or nasty words like crippled. Linton continues to say that there are many stereotypes that come with having disabilities, like saying the person is “suffering from” there disability but that kind of description needs to be more pointed and rephrased. “Disability is a linchpin in a complex web of social ideals, institutional structures, and government policies” Linton says in the beginning of the chapter to define the disabilities a person may have in his opinion, to contrast it’s true definition. Linton’s article is telling the reader how to name a person with disabilities, that they should be named the same way any other person should. It is obvious by the end the Linton feels that persons with disabilities are held to a different standard then what he would call “normal people”, but this situation needs to be re-addressed.

Linton, Simi. “Reassigning Meaning.” *The Disabilities Studies*. Ed. Lennard J. Davis. Third ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 1997. 223-236. Print.